

8-21-2008

The Effect of Gay Visual Exemplars on Issue Perceptions in Newspaper Reports

Anita Atwell

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/communication_theses



Part of the [Communication Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Atwell, Anita, "The Effect of Gay Visual Exemplars on Issue Perceptions in Newspaper Reports." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2008.

https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/communication_theses/40

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Communication at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communication Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gsu.edu.

THE EFFECT OF GAY VISUAL EXEMPLARS ON ISSUE PERCEPTIONS
IN NEWSPAPER REPORTS

by

Anita Atwell

Under the Direction of Yuki Fujioka

ABSTRACT

Visual implicit propositioning suggests that exemplars can activate stereotypes regarding social group members, affecting how individuals may perceive issues presented in a news format. This experiment sought to test the main tenet of visual implicit propositioning by examining how gay exemplars affect social estimate perceptions associated with the mortgage crisis and support for programs that would help homeowners refinance their mortgages. One hundred and ninety heterosexual college students read a news story featuring recent the mortgage crisis with a gay male couple, a heterosexual couple or a house and reported their perceptions related to various social groups. Gay exemplars did not affect social estimate perceptions, but did affect support for programs that would help homeowners refinance their homes. Attitudes towards gay males was examined as a moderating variable, however, this study did not find that these attitudes moderated the relationship between the exemplar presented and social estimates or support for programs.

INDEX WORDS: Exemplification Theory, Visual Implicit Propositioning, Stereotyping, Attitudes Toward Gay Males, Newspaper Perception

THE EFFECT OF GAY VISUAL EXEMPLARS ON ISSUE PERCEPTIONS
IN NEWSPAPER REPORTS

by

Anita Atwell

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2008

Copyright by
Anita Fay Atwell
2008

THE EFFECT OF GAY VISUAL EXEMPLARS ON ISSUE PERCEPTIONS
IN NEWSPAPER REPORTS

by

Anita Atwell

Committee Chair: Yuki Fujioka

Committee: Cynthia Hoffner
Jaye Atkinson

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
December 2008

DEDICATION

To Greg, thank you for all your love and support. I could not have done this without you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to gratefully acknowledge my advisor, Dr. Yuki Fujioka, for all her work on this thesis. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Cynthia Hoffner and Dr. Jaye Atkinson, for all their help and insight during the course of this project. I would also like to thank Elizabeth Cohen and Melissa Plew for all their support and helpful comments throughout this entire process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTERS	
1 LITERATURE REVIEW	1
Introduction	1
Exemplification Theory	2
Schema and News Processing	6
Media Priming	8
Public Attitudes toward Gays and Lesbians	11
The Current Study	13
Hypotheses and Research Questions	14
2 METHODS	18
Participants	18
Research Design	18
Experimental Stimuli	18
Procedure	19
Measures	20
3 RESULTS	23
Preliminary Analyses	23
Analysis Procedure for Hypotheses and Research Questions	23

	Testing Hypotheses and Research Questions	24
4	DISCUSSION	30
	Exemplar Effects	30
	Moderating Role of Attitudes toward Gay Males	33
	Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research	34
	Theoretical Implications	36
	REFERENCES	38
	APPENDICES	
A	NEWSPAPER ARTICLE VERSIONS	45
B	INFORMED CONSENT FORM	48
C	QUESTIONNAIRE	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Version Effects Means and Standard Deviations	26
Table 2:	Means and Standard Deviations for the Version and Attitudes Toward Gay Males Interaction	28

The Effect of Gay Exemplars on Issue Perceptions in Newspaper Reports.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

Introduction

Exemplification Theory (Zillmann, 1999; 2002; Zillmann & Brosius, 2000) addresses how beliefs and perceptions about a phenomena or issue are modified based on examples, termed exemplars. Exemplars are independent instances of a particular category experienced by an individual typically through the media, such as the news (Busselle & Shrum, 2003). Exemplars are such a ubiquitous part of news reporting thus, it is not surprising that work done by Gibson, Gan, Hill, Hoffman, and Siegler (1994, cited in Zillmann & Brosius, 2000) found that American news media is fraught with exemplars. Typically, exemplars are consistent with the focus of the news story, serving to reinforce the topic or point of the news article. In some cases, however, exemplars do not reinforce the topic of the news article, serving as the exception to the rule. It is this, consistency with the story focus versus inconsistency of the exemplar aggregation that has spawned the majority of the work employing exemplification theory.

Recently, Abraham and Appiah (2006) found that visual exemplars (i.e. photographs) contained in newspaper reports activate schemata about the social group that is presented in the photograph. This activation can in turn influence people's perceptions of issues discussed in the news story. Specifically, Abraham and Appiah (2006) argue that these visuals serve as exemplars, "which provides context that adds to and elaborates understanding of the specific issue discussed explicit in the text" (p. 189). However, past media effects research that examined the effect of social groups in the media typically incorporates a priming paradigm wherein the combination of picture and the text in news stories activates stereotypes of particular

social groups. This has not allowed researchers to ascertain the effects of visual presentations of social group members on the perception of issues that do not pertain to stereotypes associated with that group. The current study seeks to fill in the gap in the literature to examine how visual exemplars of social group members, specifically gay males, influence people's perceptions of an issue wherein the text is not likely to invoke stereotypes of the group member, like the mortgage crisis. More specifically, this study utilizes Exemplification Theory and Visual Implicit Propositioning to explicate the relationship between visual exemplars and social estimates for groups presented in news stories. It will also examine how attitudes towards gay males moderate the relationship between visual exemplars and estimate perception.

Exemplification Theory

Exemplars have been shown to affect the salience and perceptions of issues, particularly in news context (Abraham & Appiah, 2006; Aust & Zillmann, 1996; Brosius & Bathelt, 1994; Gibson & Zillmann, 2000; Zillmann, Gibson & Sargent, 1999; Zillmann, 1999, 2002, 2006; Zillmann & Brosius, 2000; Zillmann, Gibson, Sundar & Perkins, 1996; Zillmann, Knobloch & Yu, 2001). Building on the work of Fiske and Taylor (1991), exemplification theory proposes that for an exemplar to be attributed to a particular group it must have shared characteristics or features of other events, objects or phenomenon in that population. These features tend to be demographic factors, such as race, religion or gender (Oliver, 2003). According to Zillmann (2006), exemplars may be interpersonally witnessed, pictorially represented or linguistically represented. Exemplars may also be represented in a combination of both text and image. Exemplification theory addresses how beliefs and perceptions about phenomena are modified based on examples presented within the news text (Zillmann, 1999; Zillmann & Brosius, 2000).

A majority of work utilizing exemplification theory has examined the effect of exemplar aggregation on people's perceptions of base-rate information. Exemplar aggregation refers to the collection of examples in news reports, represented either pictorially, textually or the combination of both text and pictures. Base-rate information refers to information that gives a sense of the quantitative nature of a phenomenon or event (Zillmann & Brosius, 2000). Precise base-rate information refers to quantitative information, such as ratios or statistics, used to explicate a given phenomenon or event. Vague base-rate information refers to information that gives a general sense of the quantitative nature of a given phenomenon or event (such as, "a majority of students" or "few wine drinkers"). Most news sources tend to use a mix of exemplar and base-rate information, both vague and precise. However, past research has shown that people tend to disregard base-rate information in lieu of exemplar information, particularly when this information deals with support of civic issues or products (Brosius & Bathelt, 1994).

Building on the representative heuristic (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973), exemplification theory proposes that when people process information about an event, they do so by comparing exemplar groupings to individual cases. This means that when confronted with an event, the receiver of the message subconsciously compares that event to similar events in their memory allowing for the traits from the grouping to transfer to a given specific case (cf. Zillmann, 1999). Commonality is assumed between the exemplar and the group that it is exemplifying (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973; Zillmann, 1999; Zillmann & Brosius, 2000). Because commonality is assumed, people make decisions based on the attributes of the exemplar, in lieu of base-rate information that is specified in the text. Zillmann and associates examined how exemplar information (presented in photographs and text) affects readers' perceptions of incidence rates compared to base-rate information. Specifically, Zillmann, Perkins, and Sundar (1992, cited in

Zillmann & Brosius, 2000) examined how base-rate information about diet success and weight loss was used compared to eight exemplars that used the particular diet. In this study the authors manipulated how many exemplars either kept the weight off or regained the weight. The exemplar distribution was either consistent or inconsistent with the data provided in the news story. People's perceptions of weight loss success incident rates were in line with exemplar distributions, not base-rate information.

Similar to the weight loss study, Zillmann et. al. (1996) examined exemplification effects on people's perception on farming economics. They chose farming economics because it was topic that the participants were unlikely to have preexisting knowledge or beliefs. Similar to weight loss study, Zillmann and associates found that readers' perception of incidence rates of farming economics (either poor or wealthy) were in line with the exemplar aggregations and not base-rate information. Also, Brosius and Bathelt (1994) found that exemplar aggregations affected students' perceptions of topics that were both salient (university computer courses and city telephones) and not salient (apple wine and cafeteria food at another university). Specifically, they presented people with four news stories, one regarding university computer courses, one regarding city telephones, one regarding German wine and one regarding cafeteria food at a neighboring university. Each story presents either precise or vague base-rate information regarding opinions about the topic in the news story. Exemplar aggregations presented were either consistent or inconsistent with the base-rate information. People's perceptions were in line with exemplar not base-rate information. Zillmann, Gibson and Sargent (1999) found that when news reports presented an issue in a balanced manner, pictorial accompaniment that favored one side of the issue influenced reader's perceptions in the direction of the photograph.

Another focus of exemplification theory examines the effect of pictorial information on readers' perception of risks to others and self regarding the issue in the newspaper reports (e.g. Gibson & Zillmann, 2000). Gibson and Zillmann (2000) found that when a news story about a fictitious disease was presented to Caucasian participants that featured a photograph of social group members to which they do not belong (i.e. African Americans) participants overestimated African Americans' risk of contracting the disease, even though the text did not reference the ethnicity of those who were affected by the disease. This information was only provided to the reader by the picture that accompanied the text. Interestingly, they also found that when African American were pictured that Caucasians overestimated other social group members (Asians and Hispanics) as more at risk to contract the disease than Caucasians. They suggest that "people of color" were subconsciously grouped together by the perceiver. More recently, Abraham and Appiah (2006) found that when pictures of African Americans accompanied news stories, they were perceived to be more likely to be affected by the issues that were presented in the articles. More specifically, two news stories were presented, one regarding the three-strike law and one regarding school vouchers. These stories were accompanied by no photographs, two photographs of African Americans, two photographs of Caucasians and a condition with one photograph of African Americans and one photograph Caucasians. In the condition where no photographs were presented, Caucasians perceived these issues to be more associated with African Americans, however this association was strengthened by the inclusion of photographs of African Americans.

Abraham and Appiah (2006) argue that exemplars provide implicit information that can activate cognitive schema regarding social group members that in turn influence readers' perception of issues presented in the news. This is similar to work done by Grimes (1990) and

Grimes and Dreschel (1996) who found that when defamatory information was presented in the text (in this case the text was presented as voiceover on video footage), perceptions of a social group member (in this case an African American) featured in the video were distorted. In this study, participants were shown a news clip that featured either an African American or Caucasian women whose neighborhood was becoming overrun by prostitution. The clip showed the women walking through the neighborhood while the reporter discussed the prostitution problem. They found that the African American woman was more likely to be remembered as prostitute than the Caucasian woman. Grimes and Dreschel (1996) argue that visual images of minorities (i.e. news video footage) can activate schema regarding that social group, leading to defamatory perceptions of social group members.

Both Abraham and Appiah (2006) and Grimes and Dreschel (1996) argue that in the United States there are commonly known stereotypes that are associated with social groups, particularly African Americans. These stereotypes are the “picture in our heads” Lippmann (1922) articulated in his seminal work regarding this subject over 80 years ago. Specifically, Grimes and Dreschel and Abraham and Appiah (2006) argue that schema regarding social group members can be triggered by implicit visual information that was presented in news story. This process, which has been termed *implicit visual propositioning* (Abraham, 1998, cited in Abraham & Appiah, 2006), builds from exemplification, schemata and priming literature to explicate how visual imagery of social group members can influence perceptions of neutral news stories.

Schema and News Processing

Schemata are cognitive structures in the memory that represent an aspect of the external world (Zillmann & Brosius, 2000). More specifically, schemata “influence the processing of

perceptual input” and “connect existing assumptions about how the external world is to be seen and dealt with, as well as how objects, events, and persons are to be classified” (p. 35).

Schemata operation is subconsciously outside of the control of the perceiver. According to Zillmann and Brosius (2000), schematic processing dominates how people process the news due to its highly repetitive and cyclical nature. Graber (1984) argues that schematic processing serves four functions in processing news reports. The first function is that schemata decide what information is received and processed by the perceiver. If the information is not processed by the perceiver, it will not be available for use at a later time. The second function of schemata is that they help integrate new information into existing perceptions and attitudes. Third, schematic processing allows the receiver of the news to fill in gaps in schema related knowledge. Finally, schematic processing aids in problem solving because it allows the perceiver to conceive probable scenarios and likely outcomes.

Abraham and Appiah (2006) argue that due to “common socialization, stereotypes about Blacks have a long history of activation in the culture and are therefore more likely to be accessible to all viewers” (p. 189). Moreover, due to frequent activation of the stereotypes of Blacks, these associates become well learned and can be triggered when a group member is present. This line of reasoning is well established in the social psychological literature. Devine (1989), for example suggests that stereotypes of Blacks are well known in the U.S. and even if an individual does not endorse those stereotypes they are consciously aware they exist in the culture and can enumerate them. Stereotypes are the cognitive component of prejudiced attitudes. Stereotypes are a set of beliefs, traits and expectations that are affiliated with group members (Curseu, Stoop, & Schalk, 2006). According to Nisbett and Ross (1980), stereotypes are mental associations about groupings, such as women are nurturing and men are strong. In her seminal

work regarding stereotypes and prejudice towards minorities, Devine (1989) argued that there are two stages of stereotyping, activation and application. In the activation stage, when an individual is confronted with a social group member, culturally embedded stereotypes are cognitively activated, regardless of whether the individual endorses those stereotypes or not. In the application stage, the influence of the stereotype is mostly in the individuals' control and is based on their personal belief system. In other words, individuals have knowledge regarding stereotypes of African American stereotypes and they are activated in the presence of a social group member, however, if one's belief system endorses equality for all people, the individual can choose not to apply the stereotype. Devine suggests when a social group member is present that "target's group membership activates, or primes, the stereotype in the perceiver's memory" (p. 7). Priming happens when a stimulus activates schemata and this information is then applied to subsequent events or judgments, even if they are unrelated (Power, Murphy & Coover, 1996). Devine (1989) found that when subjects were primed with stereotypes associated with African Americans (i.e. musical, lazy, etc.) they rated an unrelated target person as more hostile, another stereotype associated with African Americans. Media scholars have applied the priming paradigm to explicate how mediated messages may serve as primes.

Media Priming

Media priming refers to the ability of a media message to affect how individuals will react to a subsequent stimulus. Media scholars have examined how media representations may serve as a prime in many domains (for a review, see Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen & Dillman Carpentier, 2002) such as media violence (e.g. Anderson, 1997), health (e.g. Pechman & Ratneshwar, 1994), rape myths (e.g. Intons-Petersonson, Roskos-Ewoldsen, Thomas, Shirley & Blut, 1989), political issues (e.g. Krosnick & Kinder, 1990) and stereotypes of social group

members (Dixon, 2006a; Dixon, 2006b; Gilliam & Iyengar, 1998, 2000; Hansen & Hansen, 1988; Power et. al., 1996).

Hansen and Hansen (1988) found that when men and women were shown in a rock video in a stereotypic manner, perceivers interpreted subsequent interactions of men and women more stereotypically. Specifically, they found that women were perceived as less dominant after being exposed to the stereotypical portrayals, such as being a sexual object, in the rock video, than those in the non-stereotyped condition. More recently, media scholars have focused on how media can prime stereotypes of social group members, particularly African Americans (e.g. Dixon, 2006a). Past content analysis work has shown that news portrayals of minorities generally are negative in nature (Dixon & Linz, 2000; Oliver, 2003). Also, past research shows that African Americans (Oliver, 2003) and Latinos (Dixon & Linz, 2000) tend to be portrayed in the news as dangerous criminals and lawbreakers. Power et. al.(1996) found that reading stereotypical information regarding African Americans negatively influenced subsequent judgments regarding African Americans. Similarly, Gilliam (1998) found that being exposed to a Black suspect (as opposed to a White suspect) led individuals to increasingly support the death penalty and three strikes legislation.

Although exemplification, implicit visual propositioning and media priming all draw on the same social psychology literature research regarding priming in news media has not examined the role of visual imagery separately from the effect of the explicit text. This is different than media priming because it provides researchers a truer test of the role of visual imagery, separately from textual effects. For example, media priming research regarding African Americans (e.g. Power et. al., 1996) have a stereotyped context that is incorporated into the text, such as African Americans being depicted as a criminal subject, or being lazy,

uneducated or violent, which are cultural stereotypes of this group. The argument behind media priming is that the portrayals of minorities in the media are negative in nature and to see if these portrayals affect viewers' perceptions regarding outcomes and perceptions of social group members (i.e. African Americans) researchers need to incorporate stereotypes into their stimuli. It is no surprise that in these contexts, perceptions of these individuals or groups would be negative; particularly in light the well accepted axiom that recently and frequently activated information is available more readily than distant and non-frequently activated information.

However, exemplification theory and implicit visual propositioning propose examining how minority exemplars affect perception of issues without priming a stereotype, because the text (i.e. news story) does not activate stereotypes of social group members. Although, pictures could activate schemata associated with a specific social group member, leading to stereotype activation, it is not a particular stereotype presented in a news story that is activated and would be different for each individual. Visual priming effects may be different than textual priming effects, and should be examined separately. It should be noted that Abraham and Appiah (2006) used news stories that wherein the text itself could activate stereotypes about African Americans. More specifically, their use of stories regarding three strikes laws and school vouchers are consistent with the stereotypes that African Americans are criminals and uneducated (Oliver, 2003). The general thesis of Abraham and Appiah's (2006) work is that implicit information that is only available to the perceiver through the juxtaposition of a symbolic representative of the social group will affect people's perceptions of issues presented in news stories.

To more fully test their argument that when social group members are symbolically present (in photographs) they can affect perceptions of issues presented in news reports a more neutral text needs to be used for stimuli. The current study uses gays and lesbians, a different

social group that have been negatively perceived in the United States (Kite & Deaux, 1987; Yarhouse, 1999), to test the main tenets of implicit visual propositioning. To choose a news story that is not in line with people's attitudes towards and/or stereotypes of gays and lesbians, a brief review of public perceptions of that group is discussed.

Public Attitudes toward Gays and Lesbians

Attitudes toward gays and lesbians tend to be negative in the United States (Battle & Lemelle, 2002; Hebel, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002; Herek, 1994; Herek & Capitanio, 1995, 1999; Herek & Glunt, 1993, 2006; Hinrich & Rosenberg, 2002; Lemelle & Battle, 2004; Marsiglio, 1993; Mohipp & Morry, 2004; Sakalli, 2002). Research has found that heterosexuals' attitudes towards gays and lesbians vary depending on personal variables such as race (e.g. Battle & Lemelle, 2002), age (e.g. Marsiglio, 1993), gender (e.g. Sakalli, 2002) intergroup contact (e.g. Mohipp & Morry, 2004) and gender role beliefs (e.g. Davies, 2004). Past research in public health suggests that there are negative perceptions associated with gay men as immoral because they are perceived as sexually promiscuous and most likely having HIV/AIDS (Yarhouse, 1999). Having HIV/AIDS, or being perceived as having HIV/AIDS, can lead to discrimination towards homosexuals, particularly gay males (Serovich & Mosack, 2003). Research by Hebel et. al. (2002) suggests that negative attitudes toward gay males can lead to interpersonal discrimination as opposed to formal discrimination. Formal discrimination refers to lack of opportunities based on minority status, such as job or housing discrimination. Interpersonal discrimination refers to lack of social opportunities based on minority status, such as lack of eye contact or conversation length. This study found support that negative attitudes toward gay males lead to shorter conversations, with fewer words spoken, less eye contact, and more perceived negativity by the confederate.

Kite and Deaux (1987) argue that perceptions of gays and lesbians are derived from stereotypes of men and women, such as women being nurturing and men being dominant. Past research suggests that heterosexuals perceive gays and lesbians as possessing characteristics of the opposite sex, such that lesbians are perceived as exemplifying characteristics that are considered masculine and gay males are perceived as exemplifying characteristics that are considered feminine (Kite & Deaux, 1987; Sakalli, 2002). Heterosexual individuals typically perceive lesbians as masculine, in appearance and clothing style, unattractive, how they walk, speak and dress (Kite & Deaux, 1987). In light of this, it is not surprising that Sakalli (2002) found that heterosexual males typically think that gay men are transsexuals or transvestites. It is this deviation from heterosexual norms that is the basis of negative attitudes toward this group (Haddock, Zanna & Estes, 1993). Sometimes this deviation from heterosexual norms can lead to violence towards homosexuals, particularly gay males. According to the FBI (2008), almost 16% of all hate crimes are committed against homosexuals, with 62% of those being committed due to anti-gay male bias.

Gay males are also thought to be dangerous to children, such that they are perceived as child molesters (Cameron & Cameron, 1998). Due to this negative perception of gay males there are stigmas attached to gay males taking on roles that puts them in proximity to young children, such as school teacher or scout/club leaders. However, this negative perception of gay males has transcended into discriminatory laws that prevent them from adopting children.

As discussed above, attitudes toward gays and lesbians are negative in nature. Past research also suggests that negative attitudes might be related to how people perceive and interact with gays and lesbians. For example, homonegativity can lead to discrimination, overt (Serovich & Mosack, 2003) and subtle (Hebel et. al., 2002). Homonegativity can also lead

to less support for gay marriage and gay adoption (Herek, 2002). Perhaps those with negative attitudes toward gay males will also try distant themselves from representations of that group. This could lead to lower social estimates and less support for gay males, so that those with negative attitudes toward gay males can socially distant themselves for this group, which might influence how people perceive and interpret information relevant to that group. In fact, Abraham and Appiah (2006) argue that different levels of prejudice (negative attitudes) towards social group members may affect how people integrate implicit information. Hence, the current study also attempts to explore how negative attitudes toward gay males might play a role in exemplar effects.

The Current Study

Abraham and Appiah (2006) propose that through visual implicit propositioning information that is only available to the perceiver through photographs can affect perceptions of the issues specifically stated in the text. This supports previous exemplification theory research by Zillmann and associates, particularly Gibson and Zillmann (2000). However, the two news topics that were chosen in Abraham and Appiah's work did not accurately test the main tenet of implicit visual propositioning, both three-strikes legislation and school vouchers may have primed existing stereotypes regarding African Americans confounding their results. This current research seeks to test the general thesis of implicit visual propositioning by employing a news story that does not incorporate stereotypes of gay males, such as the mortgage crisis. The current study also seeks to expand implicit visual propositioning by incorporating sexual orientation as a relevant social category that may be salient to individuals and may affect how people perceive print news stories.

The current study also seeks to expand the breadth of exemplification theory, and replicate work by Gibson and Zillmann (2000). Many studies that have utilized exemplification theory did so to examine people's perceptions of exemplar distributions related to exemplar aggregations or perceptions of risk. However, research in this area has not fully explored how exemplars affect perceptions not associated with perceptions of risk, like the mortgage crisis. This study attempts to bridge the gap in the literature, by including other measures of perception of issues, beyond perceptions of risk, such as perceptions of social groups.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Exemplification theory argues that exemplars that are presented in the news media either linguistically or visually can affect how people perceive news stories. Building on exemplification and schematic processing, Abraham and Appiah (2006), argue that visual exemplars in the media can implicitly provide information regarding the issue explicitly stated in the text. To test the main tenet of visual implicit propositioning, participants read a neutral news story regarding the mortgage crisis and homeowners that is either accompanied by a gay male couple, a heterosexual couple or a house only. Based on visual implicit propositioning the following is proposed:

H1: Reading the news story with the gay male couple will lead to participants to perceive gay males as more affected by the issues related to the topic discussed in the news article than participants who read the story with either heterosexual condition exemplar or control condition.

More specifically:

H1 a: Estimates of homeownership among gay male couples will be higher in the gay male couple condition than in the control condition or heterosexual couple condition.

H1 b: Estimates of gay male couples as being in the foreclosure process will be higher in the gay male couple condition than in the control condition or in the heterosexual couple condition.

Seeing a gay male couple when reading an article about the mortgage crisis may also be related to people's perception of seriousness of the issue among gay population.

H1 c: Perceived seriousness of the mortgage situation for gay males will be higher in the gay male couple condition than in the control condition or in the heterosexual couple condition.

This study examines how heterosexuals perceive news stories when gay male couple is visually presented as the exemplar of the news story. Past research suggests that attitudes towards gay males tend to be negative in the United States among the heterosexual population (Battle & Lemelle, 2004). Based on past priming research, visual implicit propositioning suggests that exemplars in the media can activate schemata regarding the social group they represent, serving as a prime that can affect subsequent judgments about social groups. Thus, those who read a news story with a gay male couple exemplar would be less likely to support refinance programs than other conditions:

H 2: Support for programs that help homeowners refinance their homes will be weaker in the gay couple condition than in the control or in the heterosexual couple condition.

As previously mentioned, Gibson and Zillmann (2000) found that when Caucasians read a news story that had African Americans as the exemplar they perceived not only African Americans, but also Asians and Hispanics, as more at risk for the disease presented in the news article. They speculated that activation of one sub-group category may also activate other sub-group categories because people typically group "people of color" together. If that is the case, it is possible that having gay male exemplars in the news story may influence not only perceptions

of gay males, but also perceptions of lesbians. Based on this work the following research question is proposed:

RQ1: Will the effects of gay males exemplars transfer to lesbians for estimates of homeownership (RQ1a), being in foreclosure (RQ1b) and perceived seriousness of the mortgage crisis (RQ1c)?

Abraham and Appiah (2006) note that a limitation of their study was they did not include measures to assess levels of prejudice in their sample. They argue that perhaps different levels of prejudice may affect how people integrate implicit information into their perceptions of the story. Based on this argument, the current study assessed attitudes toward gay males to see if these attitudes moderate the relationship between condition and perceptions of social estimates of groups presented in the news. Past intergroup research suggests that negative attitudes toward gay males led to prejudiced action towards them (e.g. Herek & Glunt 1993), such as not being their friend. Media priming research suggests that seeing a member of a different social group in news coverage (e.g. African Americans) might elicit negative feelings toward that group among news viewers, which may influence news viewers' subsequent social judgments (Dixon, 2006a). This may be particularly true for those with negative attitudes toward that group. If so, those people having negative attitudes toward gay males could have lower social estimates and status associated with this social group, such as less homeownership, higher estimates of foreclosure and more perceived serious of foreclosure. It also could be possible, however, that those with negative attitudes could feel that gays and lesbians are more prevalent than they actually are leading to more homeownership, due to their negative attitudes.

Those with positive attitudes, however, may perceive gay males as educated and/or wealthy, which could be related to higher social estimates of homeownership, but less

foreclosure and perceived seriousness of the mortgage situation. Heterosexual guilt could also lead participants to want to unite themselves with gays or lesbians. Heterosexual guilt is similar to White guilt, which is guilt based on one's majority status. Or it could be that those with positive attitudes toward gay males could perceive formal discrimination, in the form of housing/mortgage discrimination towards gays and lesbians and actually leading to lower social estimates. Because there are several possible responses to gay male exemplars, the current study submitted the following research questions:

RQ2: How will attitudes toward gay males moderate the relationship between visual exemplars and participants' social estimates relating to homeownership (RQ2a), the process of being in foreclosure (RQ2b) and perceived seriousness of the mortgage crisis (RQ2c)? And;

RQ3: How will attitudes toward gay males moderate the relationship between visual exemplars and support for programs that help homeowners refinance their homes?

Chapter 2

Method

Participants

Two hundred and seventeen participants were recruited from introductory communication classes at a large urban university. Twenty-five of these participants indicated that they were not heterosexual and were excluded from analysis. Another two participants were excluded from analysis because they did not follow the procedure. The final sample consisted of 190 heterosexual undergraduate students (112 female, 78 male). The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 50 years ($M=23.00$, $SD=4.97$). The majority of the participants identified themselves as either African American (34.2%) or Caucasian (34.2%), 13.2% as Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.2% as Hispanic/Latino, 1.6% as American Indian, 12.1% as other and one participant did not report their race (.5%). There were over 30 majors represented with a majority being communication (58.0%) and business (21.3%). Since the story used for stimuli was dealing with the mortgage crisis, homeownership was also ascertained ($N=8$).

Research Design

The current study employed a 3 x 2 between-subjects factorial design with version (heterosexual couple, gay male couple, control/no couple) and attitudes toward gay males (negative, positive) serving as factors. This design was used to explicate the relationship between exemplars and social estimate perceptions, support of programs that help homeowners refinance their homes and the moderating role attitudes towards gay males.

Experimental Stimuli

A news story was presented as stimuli for this study (See Appendix A). The story was about the pending law that would allow homeowners to restructure the mortgage on their primary

residences. The experimental manipulation was the photograph that accompanied the text. In one condition, the picture that accompanied the story featured a gay male couple. In the second condition, the picture that accompanied the story featured a heterosexual couple. In the control condition, only a house was pictured. The pictures were taken in front of the same house and the one of the males served as the male in the heterosexual couple and as one of the males in the gay male couple.

Procedure

Participants were recruited for this study from introductory communication classes. The participants completed this study during class time, either at the beginning or end of the class period. After reading and signing the informed consent form (See Appendix B), the participants were randomly assigned to one of the three experimental conditions. Experimental packets were alternated (i.e. heterosexual, gay male, control) and were handed to the individual students by going through the rows of the class. This was to ensure that students would have an equal opportunity to be in each of the three categories. The experimental packet consisted of two envelopes stapled together. The participants were instructed to open the envelope labeled “1” first. Inside were the news story and a questionnaire that assessed their perceptions of the news story and estimates of social groups. Once those had been collected, the participants proceeded to part two of the questionnaire in the envelope labeled “2”. This part of the questionnaire assessed attitudes toward gay males, gender role beliefs, experience with foreclosure and demographic information. Reading the article and completing the questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes. Data collection for this project took approximately three weeks.

Measures

The questionnaire administered in this study included social estimate measures (homeownership, being in the process of foreclosure, seriousness of mortgage situation), refinance program support, measures of attitudes toward gay males, experience with foreclosure, demographics and manipulation checks. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix C.

Dependent measures. There are four dependent variables that were examined for this study. The first two assessed social estimates of gay males **as being homeowners and being the in the process of foreclosure**. The participants estimated what percentage (on a ten-point scale ranging from 0-10% through 90-100%) of a given social group were homeowners or in the process of foreclosure. Seven of the nine social groups served as fillers and only the perceptions of the gay males and lesbians will be examined. The third dependent variable assessed **how serious the mortgage situation** is for different social categories. The participants rated how serious the mortgage situation was on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1=Not serious at all; 7-Very serious). Again, only two of the nine groups were used for analysis and the other seven served as fillers. The fourth dependent variable is support **of programs that assist homeowners**. For the current study a question was asked to assess exemplification effects in other domains outside the perception of risk, such as support for exemplified group (i.e. heterosexual or gay male couple as homeowner). Specifically, the question asked if they believed “[p]rograms should be in place to help homeowners refinance adjustable rate mortgages”. Participants rated this on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Agree; 7 = Strongly Disagree), this was reverse coded, so that higher scores indicate more support for programs that help homeowners refinance their homes.

Attitudes toward lesbian and gay men (ATLG). The ATLG is a brief measure of heterosexuals’ attitudes toward both gay and lesbian individuals (Herek, 1994). The scale

consists of 20-items that assess people's perceptions of gay men and lesbians and homosexuality in general. The ATLG consists of two subscales, each with 10-items, one assessing attitudes toward gay males and the other assessing attitudes toward lesbians (e.g. "I think male homosexuality is disgusting"; "Female homosexuality is a threat to many of our basic social institutions"). Both subscales incorporate items that assess attitudes toward homosexuality in general. Participants respond to each item on a 7-point Likert scale (1 =Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree). Higher scores indicate more homonegativity (negative attitudes). For this study only the subscale that assessed attitudes toward gay males was used. The reliability of this scale was high (Cronbach's $\alpha=.91$). A median split (Median = 4.40) of the mean scores was used to determine those with relatively more positive and more negative attitudes toward gay males. However, for ease of reference, these distinctions will be referred to as positive and negative throughout the results and discussion sections.

Personal experience with foreclosure. A question was asked that assessed whether the participant had personal experience with foreclosure. This variable was dichotomous, either yes (0) they did have personal experience with foreclosure, or no (1) they did not have personal experience with foreclosure.

Personal contact with gay men. Two items were used to assess personal contact with gay men. The first question asked if participants had any family members who were gay males. The second question asked if they had any friends who were gay males. As with personal experience with foreclosure, these items were either yes (0) or no (1). These scores were summed and could range from 0 to 2. Higher scores indicate more personal contact with gay men. Past research has shown that interpersonal contact with gay men is associated with more positive attitudes toward that group (Herek & Capitanio, 1995; Mohipp & Morry, 2004).

Perception of picture quality. To ensure that the picture quality was perceived similarly between conditions the participants indicated their agreement of picture quality on a 7-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Agree; 7= Strongly Disagree).

Sexual orientation. To assess sexual orientation participants rated their sexual orientation on a 7-point semantic differential scale (1=Exclusively Heterosexual; 7=Exclusively Homosexual).

Manipulation checks. A question was included to assess if the participants could correctly recall the image that accompanied the news story. The question asked the participants what was pictured in the photograph that accompanied the news article they had just read, along with four choices: heterosexual couple, gay male couple, house, or automobiles. To assess whether the participants read the article a question asked the participants to identify the topic of the article that they had just read. They had three choices: housing foreclosure, traffic and art fair.

Demographics. Gender, age, college major and race/ethnicity information was assessed from the participants.

Chapter 3

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Manipulation checks. The first manipulation check assessed whether participants recalled the correct image for their respective condition. In the heterosexual condition, 78.0% chose the image of the heterosexual couple, whereas 20.3% of the participants recalled the “house” and 1.7% selected the gay male couple. In the gay male condition, 64.4% of the participants recalled seeing a gay male couple, whereas 16.9% selected the heterosexual couple and 18.6% selected the house. In the control condition, 96.6% chose the house, 1.6% selected the gay male couple, and 1.6% selected the heterosexual couple. Since the house did appear in all pictures, participants in the heterosexual and gay male condition who recalled seeing the house were retained for analysis. Those who chose the wrong couple were excluded for further analysis.

To assess whether or not the participants read the article, all participants accurately recalled the article topic.

Perception of picture quality. To make sure that picture that accompanied the news article was perceived similarly between conditions, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on the item assessing the quality of the picture. There were no significant differences between the versions, $F(2,164) = 1.22, p = .30$.

Analysis Procedure for Hypothesis and Research Questions

To test H1 (exemplar effects on social estimates) and RQ2 (the moderating role of attitudes toward gay males) a 3 x 2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted with version (heterosexual couple, gay male couple, control) and attitudes toward gay males (positive,

negative) as between-subjects factors. Three separate analyses were conducted for each of the three dependent variables (estimates for homeownership, estimates of being in foreclosure, seriousness of the mortgage crisis).

To test H2 (exemplar effects on program support) and RQ3 (moderating role of attitudes towards gay males on program support) a 3 x 2 Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was performed with version (heterosexual couple, gay male couple and control) attitudes toward gay males (positive, negative) as between-subjects factors. Personal contact with gay men and personal experience with foreclosure were included as covariates.

To answer RQ1 (transferring effects of gay exemplars on perceptions lesbians) the same series of 3 x 2 ANOVAs were performed with version (heterosexual couple, gay male couple and control) attitudes toward gay males (positive, negative) as between-subjects factors. Three separate analyses were conducted for each of the three dependent variables (estimates for homeownership, estimates of foreclosure and perceived of the mortgage crisis for lesbians).

Testing of Hypotheses and Research Questions

Exemplar effects on social estimates. Hypothesis 1a proposed that estimates of homeownership for gay male couples would be greater in the gay male condition than in the heterosexual or in the control condition. The main effect of version was not significant $F(2, 161) = 2.13, p = .12$. H1a was not supported. For H1b, which examined the estimates of being in foreclosure, there was also no main effect for version $F(2, 161) < 1, p = .73$. H1b was not supported. H1c examined exemplar effects on perceived seriousness of the mortgage situation. Again, there was no main effect for version $F(2, 161) < 1, p = .53$. H1c was not supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that those in the gay male couple condition would be the less supportive of programs that help homeowners refinance their mortgages than those in the

heterosexual or control conditions. For H2 there was a main effect for version $F(2, 161) = 5.66, p < .01, \eta^2 = .07$. Tukey Post Hoc tests were performed to determine which means were significantly different at $p < .05$. The tests revealed that support of programs that help homeowners refinance their mortgages was lower in the gay male condition ($M=2.52$) than in the heterosexual condition ($M=3.30$). The control condition was significantly lower than the heterosexual condition but the gay male condition and the control condition ($M=2.44$) did not differ significantly from each other. Hence, H2 was partially supported. Means and standard deviations for exemplar effect effects are presented in Table 1.

Research question 1 asked whether lesbian couples would be perceived similarly to gay male couples. For RQ1a, which examines the estimate of homeownership, the main effect for version was not significant, $F(2, 161) < 1, p = .62$. For RQ1b, which examines the likelihood of foreclosure, there was no main effect for version $F(2, 161) = 1.22, p = .30$. For RQ1c, which examines the perceived seriousness of the mortgage situation, there was no main effect for version $F(2, 161) = 1.53, p = .22$.

Table 1

Version Effects Means and Standard Deviations

Dependent Variables	Version		
	Heterosexual Couple n=61	Gay Male Couple n=64	House Only n=65
Homeownership (Gay Male Couples)	4.36 (2.28)	5.21 (2.44)	5.13 (2.29)
Foreclosure (Gay Male Couples)	3.17 (1.86)	3.35 (2.17)	3.45 (2.05)
Seriousness (Gay Male Couples)	4.14 (1.46)	3.94 (1.74)	4.29 (1.61)
Support of Programs helping homeowners (Gay Male Couples)	3.30 _b (1.93)	2.52 _a (1.84)	2.44 _a (1.33)
Homeownership (Lesbian Couples)	4.02 (1.81)	4.38 (2.14)	4.34 (2.05)
Foreclosure (Lesbian Couples)	3.32 (1.83)	3.15 (1.82)	3.69 (2.03)
Seriousness (Lesbian Couples)	4.06 (1.49)	3.96 (1.64)	4.44 (1.50)

Note: Means that do not share a common subscript differ significantly per Tukey Post Hoc $p < .05$. Standard deviations appear in parentheses. Scales for homeownership and foreclosure could range between 1-10 with higher scores indicating a higher percentage estimate of the target group owning a home and being in the process of foreclosure, respectively. The scale for seriousness and support could range from 1-7 with higher scores indicating greater perceived seriousness of the mortgage situation and support, respectively.

The moderating role of attitudes towards gay males. Research question 2 examined the moderating role of attitudes towards gay males on social estimates of gay males as being associated with different aspects of the mortgage crisis and perceived seriousness of the mortgage crisis. The means for the interaction between the moderating role of attitudes toward

gay males and exemplar effects are presented in Table 2. Research question 2a examined estimates of homeownership. There was a main effect for attitudes towards gay males $F(1, 161) = 5.74, p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$, such that those with positive attitudes ($M = 4.35$) were less likely to perceive gay male couples as homeowners than those with negative attitudes ($M = 5.44$). The interaction was not significant $F(2, 161) < 1, p = .87$. RQ2b examined the moderating role of attitudes towards gay males on estimates of gay male couples being in foreclosure. The main effect of attitudes towards gay males was not significant $F(1, 161) < 1, p = .38$, nor was the interaction $F(2, 161) < 1, p = .97$. RQ2c examined the moderating role of attitudes toward gay males on the seriousness of the mortgage crisis for gay male couples. The main effect of attitudes toward gay males was not significant $F(1, 161) < 1, p = .69$, nor was the interaction $F(2, 161) < 1, p = .98$.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for the Version and Attitudes Toward Gay Males Interaction

Dependent Variables	Positive Attitudes Toward Gay Males			Negative Attitudes Toward Gay Males		
	Heterosexual Condition	Gay Male Condition	Control Condition	Heterosexual Condition	Gay Male Condition	Control Condition
Homeownership	3.73 (2.73)	4.79 (2.58)	4.52 (1.90)	5.04 (2.13)	5.63 (2.26)	5.67 (2.48)
Foreclosure	3.30 (2.04)	3.54 (2.30)	3.55 (2.12)	3.04 (1.67)	3.17 (2.06)	3.36 (1.90)
Seriousness	4.07 (1.60)	3.88 (1.75)	4.28 (1.51)	4.21 (1.32)	4.00 (1.77)	4.30 (1.72)

Note: Standard deviations appear in parentheses. Scales for homeownership and foreclosure could range between 1-10 with higher scores indicating a higher percentage estimate of the target group owning a home and being in the process of foreclosure, respectively. The scale for seriousness and support could range from 1-7 with higher scores indicating greater perceived seriousness and support respectively.

Research Question 3 examined the moderating role of attitudes toward gay males in support for programs that help homeowners refinance their adjustable rate mortgages. There was a main effect for attitudes towards gay males $F(1, 161) = 9.66, p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$, such that those with negative attitudes towards gay males were less supportive of programs that may help homeowners ($M = 2.34$) than were those with positive attitudes ($M = 3.14$). The interaction was not significant $F(2, 161) = 2.62, p = .08, \eta^2 = .03$.

In sum, this study found no exemplar effects on social estimates of gay males or lesbians. However, there was an exemplar effect for support of programs that help homeowners refinance their mortgages. Attitudes toward gay males seem to be related to social estimates of homeownership for gay males, but did not moderate the impact of version on estimates of

homeownership, estimates of foreclosure, perceived seriousness of the mortgage situation and support for programs that help homeowners refinance their homes.

Chapter 4

Discussion

The primary purpose of the current study, based on theories of exemplification and visual implicit propositioning, was to examine how visual exemplars presented in the news coverage of mortgage crisis, more specifically gay males, influence people's social estimate perceptions and support for programs that help homeowners refinance their homes. The study addressed three main social estimate variables: homeownership, being in the process of foreclosure and seriousness of the mortgage situation. This study also examined how visual exemplars affect support for programs that help homeowners finance their homes. Lastly, this study tested the moderating role of attitudes toward gay males in exemplar effects.

Exemplar Effects

This study proposed that seeing a gay male couple in news coverage of the mortgage crisis would lead to greater social estimates of homeownership and being in the process of foreclosure than seeing a heterosexual couple or no couple. It was also proposed that seeing a gay male couple in the news coverage of the mortgage crisis would lead to greater perceived seriousness of the mortgage crisis for gay male couples than seeing a heterosexual couple or no couple. However, the results did not find support for these hypotheses. Perceptions of gay males couples were not different for any of the three aspects of the mortgage crisis that were examined (homeownership, foreclosure, seriousness of mortgage situation) based on the version that was presented. These findings are surprising in light of many studies that have found support for exemplification theory. One of the reasons for limited support would be lack of perceived relevance and salience for the issue being discussed in the news (Brosius & Bathelt, 1994). The topic used by the current study was the current mortgage crisis which may not have

been salient to the sampled population. The sample consisted of college undergraduates, and a majority of which were not homeowners and perhaps they may have felt that this topic was not important to them, and therefore did not fully engage in the issue discussed in the article.

Another reason that exemplar effects were not found could be related to the photograph that accompanied the news article. In the gay male couple condition, the photograph featured two White males with their arms around each other. It could be that the two men in the picture were seen as brothers or even relatives not perceived as a gay male couple. Although a question was included to assess what the participants recalled seeing in the photograph that accompanied the news article, they were given four choices and only one choice (gay male couple) could be related to two males in the photograph. The participants may not have perceived the two males in the photograph as a gay male couple, but due to the lack of the other relevant choices they chose the gay male couple as the feature of the photograph. The general thesis of visual implicit propositioning is that implicit information that is only available to the perceiver through visual images that accompanies news stories will affect people's perceptions of issues presented in news stories. To accurately test the main tenet of visual implicit propositioning, the couple's sexual orientation could not be explicitly stated in the text. This would include any captions that could accompany the photographs. A pilot study should have been conducted to assess which pictures of the two men were perceived as a gay male couple more rigorously. Future studies should pilot test any visual images used for stimuli.

The use of gay males as one of the salient social groups could also be another possible reason for the lack of support for the hypotheses. The current study chose gay males as a target group due to the dearth of media stereotyping experiments incorporating gays and lesbians as targets in their designs. Also past research suggests that sexual orientation is considered to be a

relevant category for social grouping (Yarhouse, 1999). Although this group may be able to conceal their identity unlike other social groups, such as race or gender. Future studies should look at exemplar effects for other, visible, social groupings, such as age, race or gender.

Hypothesis two proposed that those in the gay male couple condition will be the less supportive of programs that help homeowners refinance their adjustable rate mortgages than those in the control or in the heterosexual couple conditions. Past research in social psychology (e.g. Battle & Lemelle, 2004) suggests that attitudes toward gay males are negative in the United States. It was reasoned that people exposed to the gay male couple would equate gay males with homeowners (exemplar effects) and due to general negative attitudes toward gay males people would be less likely to support programs to help them refinance their mortgages. This study partially supported this hypothesis. Those in the heterosexual couple condition were the most supportive of programs that help homeowners refinance their adjustable rate mortgages, compared to those in the gay male couple and in the control condition. However, contrary to H2 those in the control condition were not more supportive of programs than those in the gay male condition. In light of the present study's lack of exemplification effects (H1), it could be that the picture of the gay males was not effective in eliciting perception change with regard of association with different aspects of the mortgage crisis. It may be that the image of the heterosexual couple alongside a news article about the mortgage crisis might trigger a feeling of economic threat that could affect heterosexual group members. This could lead participants to be more supportive of programs that would help heterosexuals. Past intergroup research (e.g. Stephan & Stephan, 1999) suggest that these types of threats can lead to ingroup bias. Ingroup refers to the social group that one belongs to and is salient at a given time (Stephan & Stephan, 1999). Future research should examine the role of threats in exemplar effects.

The current study also examined transferring effects (RQ1) suggested by Gibson and Zillmann (2000). Those authors found that when Caucasian participants were presented with an African American exemplar in a news story about a fictitious disease, other racial social groups (Hispanics and Asians) were perceived to be more at risk than ingroup members (Caucasians). Exemplification theory argues that exemplars activate cognitive representations of the social group and perceptions can transfer to similar groups. The current study, thus, asked if gay exemplars presented in the news coverage of the mortgage crisis would influence perceptions of lesbian couples. Similar to those of gay male couples, there were no differences found in perceptions of lesbians couple based on experimental version. However, due to the limitations of the gay male couple photograph, perhaps, this might not be an ideal situation to test for transferring effects. If the males in the photograph were perceived as a gay male couple, then the results of this study would suggest that there was a transferring effect. However, because perceptions of the couple in the photographs were not adequately assessed, the transferring effect results were not conclusive. Future studies should continue to test the transferring effects that were suggested by Gibson and Zillmann (2000) using gays and lesbians because they tend to be grouped together.

Moderating Role of Attitudes toward Gay Males

This study also asked if attitudes toward gay males moderated the effect of the visuals presented and estimates of being homeowners (RQ2a), estimates of being in foreclosure (RQ2b), perceived seriousness of the mortgage situation (RQ2c) and support of programs that would help homeowners refinance their homes (RQ3). The results indicated that attitudes toward gay males are related to social estimates for homeownership and support for programs that help

homeowners refinance their mortgages but did not moderate the relationship between the exemplars presented and any of these dependent variables.

Results indicate that those with negative attitudes were more likely to perceive gay males as homeowners than those with positive attitudes. This may be because those with negative attitudes overestimate the amount of gays (and probably lesbians) in the United States. In fact, past research suggests that those with negative attitudes towards immigrants perceive higher social estimates of the immigrant population (Semyonov, Raijman, Yom Tov & Schmidt, 2004). Or, perhaps those with positive attitudes towards gay males feel that there may be discrimination towards gay male couples who try to purchase their own home, which might be related to lower estimates of gay homeowners. In fact, participants with positive attitudes toward gay males were more supportive of programs that would help homeowners refinance their homes.

The current study did not provide any support for a moderating role of attitudes toward gay males in exemplar effects. In light of this study's limitation regarding the photograph of the gay male couple, it is possible that for some participants in a gay male couple condition, seeing gay male exemplars did not elicit negative feelings because two males were not perceived as a gay male couple. Thus, attitudes toward gay males would not moderate the effect of the visuals presented.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study had several limitations. First, this study did not ascertain exposure to media or other information about the current mortgage situation. It could be the case that those who were exposed to other media sources may already have preexisting attitudes or beliefs towards this situation and this could have potentially confounded the findings of this study. Atlanta, where the data were collected, has one of the highest foreclosure rates in the nation (Atlanta Journal

Constitution, 2008) and foreclosure is a reoccurring topic in both print and broadcasting news. It would not be surprising that participants may have preexisting perceptions of the social groups affiliated with the mortgage crisis. Past research employing exemplification theory, specifically Zillmann et. al. (1996), argues that using a news topic about which participants have no preexisting attitudes provides a truer test of the phenomenon. Future research examining current news topics, like the mortgage crisis, should ascertain exposure to media outside of the experimental stimuli to see if preexisting knowledge or beliefs affect the experimental findings.

Another problematic finding of this study was recall of the photo content. As a manipulation check, at the end of the study, participants were asked to indicate what they saw in the photograph that accompanied the news article by choosing one of the following options: heterosexual couple, gay male couple, or house. In the heterosexual condition, considerable number of participants chose the option of “house.” It should be noted that the house appeared in all conditions, and that the manipulation check should have been worded to say “house only”. Thus, participants that recalled seeing the house were included in the analysis. In the gay male condition, the majority of incorrect answers were for the heterosexual couple. Exemplification theory and visual implicit propositioning both argue that information that is available to the perceiver through visual images affects how issues in the news are processed. It could be reasoned that if image recall is poor, then perhaps the exemplar cannot have any effect on the responses to issue being presented in the news. It is not clear if participants provided incorrect answers because the stimulus was not perceived as intended (i.e., a gay male couple in the gay male version, and a heterosexual couple in the heterosexual version) or because the question was not asked adequately to assess the content of the photo (in the heterosexual version). Also, the manipulation check question was not given at the end of the experiment, but at the end of the

entire study, which included the actual experiment and a relatively lengthy attitudes survey. Therefore, it is not clear that some participants in the gay male version might have provided an incorrect answer (a heterosexual couple) because the stimulus was not perceived as intended or because of other reasons such as fatigue effects. Future research should refine measures that are used to ascertain image recall.

Finally, although photographs of both heterosexual and gay male couples were presented, only heterosexuals' attitudes were assessed. This study examined how exemplars affect social estimates and support for social groups. In the initial sample, there were participants who indicated that they were not exclusively heterosexual, but, there were not enough to conduct a meaningful analysis. Future research should include gay males and lesbians to see if exemplification effects can be found for those populations.

Theoretical Implications

The current study poses an interesting methodological limitation for visual implicit propositioning. The main tenet of visual implicit propositioning proposes that information that is only available to the perceiver through photographs may affect how individuals interpret information that is explicitly stated in the text. To accurately test this tenet, group membership cannot be mentioned in the news article. However, there are many stigmatized groups that cannot be visually represented because they can conceal their status, such as those with disabilities or chronic illness, like HIV/AIDS, depression, bipolar disorder or schizophrenia. This could also be the case with certain ethnic groups, like Hispanics (Mexican vs. Columbians) or different Asian nationalities (Japanese vs. Korean). This could be the case with gays or lesbians. Even if the photographs for the current study were pilot tested rigorously, it could be that those with negative attitudes toward gay males would still distance themselves from this

group and not perceive the couple as gay males. Future studies should examine exemplification and visual implicit propositioning effects by including more explicit visuals so that group categorization is made known to the perceiver. In the case of gays and lesbians, perhaps adding subtle cues, like a gay pride pin could be to cue in participants to their sexual orientation. Depending on the topic of the news article, perhaps stereotyped cues could be used to signify sexual orientation. Although, this would not have been an appropriate visual to accompany an article about the mortgage crisis, another possibility would be to show more obvious affection between the people in the photographs, such as kissing.

The present study demonstrated that exemplars can affect people's perception of issues presented in the news, but not social estimates of topics related to the news topic. More specifically, exemplars affected people's support for programs that help homeowners refinance their homes. This study adds to the body of literature that suggests that the media plays an important role in shaping opinions about public policy. Newsrooms should be aware of the role visual imagery plays when choosing pictures to accompany news stories.

References

- Abraham, L. & Appiah, O. (2006). Framing news stories: The role of visual imagery in priming racial stereotypes. *The Howard Journal of Communication*, 17, 183-203.
- Anderson, C. A. (1997). Effects of violent movies and trait hostility on hostile feelings and aggressive thoughts. *Aggressive Behavior*, 23, 161-178.
- Armour, S. (2008, April 23). Home sales, prices drop as traditionally strong spring season starts. USA Today. Retrieved, April 26, 2008, Newspaper Source database.
- Aust, C. F., & Zillmann, D. (1997). Effects of victim exemplification in television news on viewer perception of social issues. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 73, 787-803.
- Battle, J., & Lemelle, A. J. (2002). Gender differences in African American attitudes toward gay males. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 26, 134-139.
- Brosius, H. –B., & Bathelt, A. (1994). The utility of exemplars in persuasive communications. *Communication Monographs*, 21, 48-78.
- Busselle, R. W., & Shrum, L. J. (2003). Media exposure and exemplar accessibility. *Media Psychology*, 5, 255-282.
- Cameron, P. & Cameron, K. (1998). What proportion of newspaper stories about child molestation involve homosexuality? *Psychological Reports*, 82, 863-871.
- Collier, J. (2008, March 7). Atlanta has one of the highest foreclosure rates in the nation. *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. Retrieved June 13, 2008, from www.ajc.com.
- Davies, M. (2004). Correlates of negative attitudes toward gay men: Sexism, male role norms, and male sexuality. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 41, 259-266.

- Devine, P. G. (1989). Stereotypes and prejudice: Their automatic and controlled components. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56, 5-18.
- Dixon, T. L. (2006a). Psychological reaction to crime news portrayals of black criminals: Understanding the moderating roles of prior news viewing and stereotype endorsement. *Communication Monographs*, 73, 162-187.
- Dixon, T. L. (2006b). Schemas as average conceptions: Skin tone, television news exposure, and culpability judgments. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 83, 131-149.
- Dixon, T. L., & Linz, D. (2000). Overrepresentation and underrepresentation of African Americans and Latinos as lawbreakers on television news. *Journal of Communication*, 50, 131-154.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (2006). Hate crime statistics. Retrieved July 21, 2008, from www.fbi.gov.
- Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (1991). *Social cognition* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gibson, R., & Zillmann, D. (2000). Reading between the photographs: The influence of incidental pictorial information on issue perception. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77(2), 355-366.
- Gilliam, F. D., & Iyengar, S. (1998). The superpredator script. *Nieman Reports*, 52, 45-46.
- Gilliam, F. D., & Iyengar, S. (2000). Prime suspects: The influence of local television news on the viewing public. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44, 560-573.
- Graber, D. A. (1984). *Processing the news: How people tame the information tide*. New York: Longman.
- Grimes, T. (1990). Encoding TV news messages into memory. *Journalism Quarterly*, 67, 757-766.

- Grimes, T., & Drechsel, R. (1996). Word-picture juxtaposition, schemata, and defamation in television news. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 73, 169-180.
- Haddock, G., Zanna, M. P., & Esses, V. M. (1993). Assessing the structure of prejudicial attitudes: The case of attitudes toward homosexuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1105-1118.
- Hansen, C. H., & Hansen, R. D. (1988). How rock music videos can change what is seen when boy meets girl: Priming stereotypic appraisal of social interaction. *Sex Roles*, 19, 287-316.
- Hebl, M. R, Foster, J. B., Mannix, L. M., & Dovidio, J. F. (2002). Formal and interpersonal discrimination: A field study of bias toward homosexual applicants. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 815-825.
- Herek, G. M. (1994). Assessing heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: A review of empirical research with the ATLG scale. In B. Greene & G. M. Herek (Eds.). *Lesbian and gay psychology: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 206-228). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Herek, G.M. (2002). Gender gaps in public opinion about lesbian and gay men. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 66, 40-66.
- Herek, G. M., & Capitanio, J. P. (1995). Black heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men in the United States. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 30, 95-105.
- Herek, G. M., & Capitanio, J. P. (1999). Sex differences in how heterosexuals think about lesbians and gay men: Evidence from survey context effects. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 34, 348-360.

- Herek, G. M., & Glunt, E. K. (1993). Interpersonal contact and heterosexual attitudes toward gay men: Results from a national survey. *The Journal of Sex Research, 30*, 239-244.
- Herek, G. M., & Glunt, E. K. (2006). Attitudes toward homosexuality among U.S. resident Mexican Descent. *The Journal of Sex Research, 43*, 122-135.
- Hinrich, D. W., & Rosenberg, P. J. (2002). Attitudes toward gay, lesbian, and bisexual person among heterosexual liberal arts college students. *Journal of Homosexuality, 43*, 61-84.
- Intons-Peterson, M. J., Roskos-Edwoldsen, B., Thomas, L., Shirley, M., & Blut, D. (1989). Will educational materials reduce negative effects of exposure to sexual violence? *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 8*, 256-275.
- Kite, M. E., & Deaux, K. (1987). Gender belief systems: Homosexuality and the implicit inversion theory. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 11*, 83-96.
- Krosnick, J.A., & Kinder, D. R. (1990). Altering the foundations of support for the president through priming. *American Political Science Review, 84*, 497-512.
- Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public Opinion*. New York: The Free Press.
- Lemelle, A. J., & Battle, J. (2004). Black masculinity matters in attitudes toward gay males. *Journal of Homosexuality, 47*, 39-51.
- Marsiglio, W. (1993). Attitudes toward homosexual activity and gays as friends: A national survey of heterosexual 15-to 19-year-old males. *The Journal of Sex Research, 30*, 12-17.
- Mohipp, C., & Morry, M. M. (2004). The relationship of symbolic beliefs and prior contact to heterosexuals' attitudes towards gay men and lesbian women. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 36*, 36-44.
- Nisbett, R. E., & Ross, L. (1980). *Human inference: Strategies and shortcomings of social judgment*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Oliver, M. B. (2003). African American men as “criminal and dangerous”: Implications of media portrayals of crime on the “criminalization” of African American men. *Journal of African American Studies*, 7, 3-18.
- Pechman, C., & Ratneshwar, S. (1994). The effects of anti-smoking advertising on young adolescents’ perceptions of perceptions of peers who smoke. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21, 236-251.
- Power, J. G., Murphy, S. T., & Coover, G. (1996). Priming prejudice: How stereotypes and counter-stereotypes influence attribution of responsibility and credibility among ingroups and outgroups. *Human Communication Research*, 23, 36-58.
- Roskos-Ewoldsen, D. R., Roskos-Ewoldsen, B., & Dillmann Carpentier, F. R. (2002). Media priming: A synthesis. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.). *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (97-119). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Reuters (2008). Calls for mortgage bailout grow as crisis deepens. Retrieved April 26, 2008, from www.cnbc.com/id/23829093
- Sakalli, N. (2002). Pictures of male homosexuals in the heads of Turkish college students: The effects of sex difference and social contact on stereotyping. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 43, 111-126.
- Semyonov, M., Rajjman, R., Yom Tov, A., & Schmidt, P. (2004). Population size, perceived threat, and exclusion: A multiple-indicators analysis of attitudes toward foreigners in Germany. *Social Science Research*, 33, 681-701.
- Serovich, J. M., & Mosack, K. E. (2003). Reasons for HIV disclosure or nondisclosure to casual sexual partners. *AIDS Education Prevention*, 15, 70-80.

- Smith, K. (2007, November 27). Homeowners may get help in avoiding foreclosure. San Gabriel Valley Tribune. Retrieved April 26, 2008, from Newspaper Source database.
- Stansbury, R. (2008, February 13). Mortgage relief plans leaves lots of pain: New state loans reach few homeowners. The Hartford Courant. Retrieved April 26, 2008 from Newspaper Source database.
- Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W., (1996). Predicting prejudice. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 20, 409-426.
- Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1973). Availability: A heuristic for judging frequency and probability. *Cognitive Psychology*, 5, 207-232.
- Yarhouse, M. A. (1999). Social cognition research on the formation and maintenance of stereotypes: Application to marriage and family therapists working with homosexual clients. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 27, 149-161.
- Zillmann, D. (1999). Exemplification theory: Judging the whole by some of its parts. *Media Psychology*, 1, 69-94.
- Zillmann, D. (2002). Exemplification theory of media influence. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 19-41). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Zillmann, D. (2006). Exemplification effects in the promotion of health and safety. *Journal of Communication*, 56, s221-s237.
- Zillmann, D. & Brosius, H. –B. (2000). *Exemplification in communication*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Zillmann, D., Gibson, R., & Sargent, S. L. (1999). Effects of photographs in news-magazine reports on issue perception. *Media Psychology*, 3, 207-228.

Zillmann, D., Gibson, R., Sundar, S. S., & Perkins, J. W. (1996). Effects of exemplification in news reports on the perceptions of social issues. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 73, 427-444.

Zillmann, D., Knobloch, S., & Yu, H. (2001). Effects of photographs on the selective reading of news reports. *Media Psychology*, 3, 301-324.

Appendix A: Newspaper Article Versions

Pending bankruptcy law could allow homeowners to refinance their homes

By STAFF

The Associated Press

A bill pending in Congress would allow homeowners the ability to restructure the mortgages on their primary residences, in their bankruptcy proceedings. Under the current law, bankruptcy courts can modify loans on vacation homes, cars, boats and investments properties, but not primary residences.

Proponents of the bill argue that a majority of subprime mortgages from 2006 and 2007 have adjustable rates, almost all of them with a two to three-year reset. In these types of loans, the interest rate on the note adjusts periodically, based on the economic climate. Typical



increases, even if interest rates don't change is about 30 to 50 percent. Some argue that lenders were taking advantage of people who wanted to buy homes, by financing homes that people could not really afford and not explaining the consequences of mortgages that they were signing for.

However, not everyone supports allowing homeowners to restructure their subprime mortgages,

in order to avoid foreclosure. Some economists have long argued that there was a bubble in home prices. Housing prices rose 85% between 1997 and 2006 and have only fallen 15% since then. Compared to measures such as rents and household income, housing prices are still out of equilibrium. According to this viewpoint the prices still need to drop to entice more buyers into the market. Other critics argue that the rescue plan rewards reckless behavior and transfers risk to responsible homeowners, who had good credit scores and larger down payments.

Pending bankruptcy law could allow homeowners to refinance their homes

By STAFF

The Associated Press

A bill pending in Congress would allow homeowners the ability to restructure the mortgages on their primary residences, in their bankruptcy proceedings. Under the current law, bankruptcy courts can modify loans on vacation homes, cars, boats and investments properties, but not primary residences.

Proponents of the bill argue that a majority of subprime mortgages from 2006 and 2007 have adjustable rates, almost all of them with a two to three-year reset. In these types of loans, the interest rate on the note adjusts periodically, based on the economic climate. Typical



increases, even if interest rates don't change is about 30 to 50 percent. Some argue that lenders were taking advantage of people who wanted to buy homes, by financing homes that people could not really afford and not explaining the consequences of mortgages that they were signing for.

However, not everyone supports allowing homeowners to restructure their subprime mortgages,

in order to avoid foreclosure. Some economists have long argued that there was a bubble in home prices.

Housing prices rose 85% between 1997 and 2006 and have only fallen 15% since then. Compared to measures such as rents and household income, housing prices are still out of equilibrium. According to this viewpoint the prices still need to drop to entice more buyers into the market. Other critics argue that the rescue plan rewards reckless behavior and transfers risk to responsible homeowners, who had good credit scores and larger down payments.

Pending bankruptcy law could allow homeowners to refinance their homes

By STAFF

The Associated Press

A bill pending in Congress would allow homeowners the ability to restructure the mortgages on their primary residences, in their bankruptcy proceedings. Under the current law, bankruptcy courts can modify loans on vacation homes, cars, boats and investments properties, but not primary residences.

Proponents of the bill argue that a majority of subprime mortgages from 2006 and 2007 have adjustable rates, almost all of them with a two to three-year reset. In these types of loans, the interest rate on the note adjusts periodically, based on the economic climate. Typical



increases, even if interest rates don't change is about 30 to 50 percent. Some argue that lenders were taking advantage of people who wanted to buy homes, by financing homes that people could not really afford and not explaining the consequences of mortgages that they were signing for.

However, not everyone supports allowing homeowners to restructure their subprime mortgages,

in order to avoid foreclosure. Some economists have long argued that there was a bubble in home prices. Housing prices rose 85% between 1997 and 2006 and have only fallen 15% since then. Compared to measures such as rents and household income, housing prices are still out of equilibrium. According to this viewpoint the prices still need to drop to entice more buyers into the market. Other critics argue that the rescue plan rewards reckless behavior and transfers risk to responsible homeowners, who had good credit scores and larger down payments.

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Georgia State University Department of Communication Informed Consent Form

Title: News Coverage and Personal Attitudes

Principal Investigator: Yuki Fujioka

Student Principal Investigator: Anita Atwell

I. Purpose: You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to assess if people's attitudes affect perceptions of news stories. A total of 200 participants will be recruited for this study from Georgia State University. This study will be conducted in one session and will take approximately 20 minutes of your time.

II. Procedures: You will be asked to read a short news story and then complete a questionnaire that asks you about your attitudes, opinions and demographic information. You will not receive any credit for your participation.

III. Risks: In this study, you will not have any more risk than you would in a normal day of life. Some people may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions that assess personal attitudes. You may skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

IV. Benefits: Participation in this study may not benefit you personally. However, the data collected may benefit society. The information we learn could help in understanding people's perception of news stories.

V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits.

VI. Confidentiality: We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. We will use a participant number, rather than your name on study records. Only the principal investigators of this study will have access to the information you provide. It will be stored in a private-use file cabinet. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally.

VII. Contact Persons: If you have any questions about this study, please call Dr. Yuki Fujioka by phone at 404-413-5663 or by email jouykf@langate.gsu.edu, or Anita Atwell by phone at 404-413-5600 or by email jouafa@langate.gsu.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or svogtner1@gsu.edu.

VIII. Copy of Consent Form: We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date
Principal Investigator		Date

Appendix C: Questionnaire

**For the questions below please rate the article you have just read based on the following scale
1=Strongly Agree; 7 = Strongly Disagree.**

The article you have just read is:

	Strongly Agree						Strongly Disagree					
1. Entertaining.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					
2. Interesting	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					
3. Informative	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					
4. Well-written.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					
5. Objective	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					
6. Realistic	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					
7. Easy to read	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					
8. It has a good visual image	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....					

Please indicate the % of ADULT people from each of the following social groups in the U.S. who you believe OWN their homes(s)? This question is NOT asking you to provide the correct answers, but to provide your own best estimate.

What percent of people in each group do you guess own a house?

	10% or less	11- 20%	21- 30%	31- 40%	41- 50%	51- 60%	61- 70%	71- 80%	81- 90%	91- 100%
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. African Americans	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
10. Men	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
11. Heterosexual couples.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
12. Women	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
13. Single Parents	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
14. Lesbian couples	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
15. White Americans	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
16. Gay male couples	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....
17. College students	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9.....	10.....

What percent of people in each group do you guess have a mortgage loan? This question is NOT asking you to provide the correct answers, but to provide your own best estimate.

What percentage of people in each group do you guess have a mortgage loan?

	10% or less	11- 20%	21- 30%	31- 40%	41- 50%	51- 60%	61- 70%	71- 80%	81- 90%	91- 100%
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
18. African Americans	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
19. Men	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
20. Heterosexual couples	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
21. Women	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
22. Single Parents	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
23. Lesbian couples	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
24. White Americans	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
25. Gay male couples	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
26. College students	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....

What percent of people in each group do you guess are in the foreclosure process? This question is NOT asking you to provide the correct answers, but to provide your own best estimate.

What percentage of people in each group do you guess are in the foreclosure process?

	10% or less	11- 20%	21- 30%	31- 40%	41- 50%	51- 60%	61- 70%	71- 80%	81- 90%	91- 100%
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
27. African Americans	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
28. Men	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
29. Heterosexual couples	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
30. Women	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
31. Single Parents	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
32. Lesbian couples	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
33. White Americans	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
34. Gay male couples	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....
35. College students	.....1.....	.....2.....	.....3.....	.....4.....	.....5.....	.....6.....	.....7.....	.....8.....	.....9.....	.....10.....

How serious do you think the mortgage situation that you just read has been for each of the following social groups? Please rate how serious the mortgage situation is for the following groups based on the following scale 1= Not Serious At All; 7 = Very Serious.

	Not Serious At All						Very Serious
36. African Americans	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
37. Men	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
38. Heterosexual couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
39. Women	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
40. Single parents	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
41. Lesbians couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
42. White Americans	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
43. Gay male couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
44. College students	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....

Do you support members of social of following social groups owning their own home? Please rate your support on the following scale 1= Not At All Supportive; Very Supportive.

	Not At All Supportive						Very Supportive
45. African Americans	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
46. Heterosexual couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
47. Single parents	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
48. Lesbian couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
49. White Americans	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
50. Gay male couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
51. College students	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
52. Unmarried heterosexual couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
53. Interracial couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....

How willing would you be to have members of the following social groups as neighbors? Please rate your willingness on the following scale 1= Not Willing; 7= Very Willing.

	Not Willing						Very Willing
54. African Americans	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
55. Heterosexual couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
56. Single parents	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
57. Lesbian couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
58. White Americans	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....
59. Gay male couples	.....1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....

	Not Willing	Very Willing
60. College students	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
61. Unmarried heterosexual couples	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
62. Interracial couples	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	

In your opinion, who are responsible for the current mortgage situations you just read? Please rate responsibility based on the following scale 1 = Not Responsible; 7 = Highly Responsible.

	Not Responsible	Highly Responsible
63. The Federal Government	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
64. The State Government	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
65. Housing Industry	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
66. Homeowners	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
67. Mortgage Industry	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	

Below are statements regarding the mortgage situation that you just read about. Please specify the extent that you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling one of the following for each statement (1= Strongly Agree; 7= Strongly Disagree).

	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
68. The government should intervene in the mortgage situation.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
69. The housing market should be allowed to correct itself, without government regulation.	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
70. Homeowners should accept the consequences of mortgages they signed for, even if that means foreclosure.	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
71. Programs should be in place to help homeowners refinance adjustable rate mortgages.	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	
72. Many of the homeowners who are in the process of foreclosure were not properly informed about the consequences of adjustable rate mortgages.	.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7	

Please indicate how you feel about the following statements. Please answer honestly, remembering that you answers will be kept confidential. (1= Strongly Agree; 7= Strongly Disagree).

- | | Strongly
Agree | Strongly
Disagree |
|--|--|----------------------|
| 73. It's important that men appear masculine and that women appear feminine. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 74. Males homosexuals should not be allowed to teach school. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 75. It is inappropriate for a man to use clear nail polish on his fingernails. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 76. If the aims of women's liberation are met, men will lose more than they will gain. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 77. Males homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 78. A woman needs the support of a man to advance professionally. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 79. Children raised by single mothers are usually worse off compared to children raised by married couples. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 80. Men who end up gay probably didn't have strong male role models during their childhood. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 81. If a man has homosexual feelings, he should do everything he can to overcome them. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 82. A man who is vulnerable is a sissy. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 83. Male homosexuality is a perversion. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 84. Openly expressing my affection to another person of my own sex is difficult for me because I don't want others to think I'm gay. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |

- | | Strongly
Agree | Strongly
Disagree |
|---|--|----------------------|
| 85. I would feel comfortable attending social functions where the majority of people are homosexuals of my own sex. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 86. I would feel comfortable knowing that members of my sex found me attractive. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 87. If a member of my sex made a sexual advance toward me I would feel angry. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 88. Gay and lesbian couples should be allowed to get married the same as heterosexual couples. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 89. I think male homosexuals are disgusting. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 90. I would be comfortable if I found myself attracted to member of my sex. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 91. Male homosexuality is merely a different kind of lifestyle that should not be condemned. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 92. I would feel nervous being in a group of homosexuals of my own sex. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 93. I would not be too upset if I learned that my son were a homosexual. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 94. I would support not support a law that allowed gays and lesbians to get married. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 95. I would feel at ease conversing alone with a homosexual of my own sex. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 96. Sex between two men is just plain wrong. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |

- | | Strongly
Agree | Strongly
Disagree |
|--|--|----------------------|
| 97. I would feel comfortable with being labeled as homosexual. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 98. The idea of homosexual marriages seems ridiculous to me. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 99. Male homosexuals should be allowed to adopt children the same as heterosexual couples. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |

Below are questions regarding people's motivation to control prejudice responses. To understand how people's motivations are related to media perception we ask that you answer honestly, remembering that your answers will be kept confidential. For the questions below, please indicate the degree that you agree with the statements based on the following scale (1=Strongly Agree; 7=Strongly Disagree).

- | | Strongly
Agree | Strongly
Disagree |
|---|--|----------------------|
| 101. Because of today's politically correct standards I try to appear nonprejudiced toward people who are gay or lesbian. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 102. Because of my personal values, I believe that using stereotypes about gays and lesbians is wrong. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 103. If I acted prejudiced toward gays and lesbians, I would be concerned that others would be angry with me. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 104. I attempt to appear nonprejudiced toward gays and lesbians in order to avoid disapproval from others. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 105. I try to act nonprejudiced toward gays and lesbians because of pressure from others. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 106. Being nonprejudiced toward gays and lesbians is important to my self-concept. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 107. According to my personal values, using stereotypes about gays and lesbians is OK. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |

- | | Strongly
Agree | Strongly
Disagree |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| 108. I try to hide any negative thoughts about gays and lesbians in order to avoid negative reactions from others. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 109. I am personally motivated by my beliefs to be nonprejudiced toward gays and lesbians. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |
| 110. I attempt to act in nonprejudiced ways toward gays and lesbians because it is personally important to me. |1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7 | |

Finally, please tell us a few more things about yourself.

111. Gender: Male _____ or Female _____.

112. Age: _____

113. What is your major? _____

114. What is your religion? _____

115. How important is religion in your daily life?

Very Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not Important At All

116. What are your political views?

Very								Very
Liberal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Conservative

117. Do you own your own home?

____ Yes ____ No

118. If yes, have you ever been in the foreclosure process?

____ Yes ____ No

119. If yes, was the home foreclosed upon?

____ Yes ____ No

120. Do you have any close friends who are gays or lesbians?

____ Yes ____ No

If so, how many? _____

121. Do you have any family members who are gay or lesbians?

____ Yes ____ No

If so, how many? _____

122. Do you have any co-workers who are gay or lesbians?

____ Yes ____ No

If so, how many? _____

123. Do you have any acquaintances who are gay or lesbians?

____ Yes ____ No

If so, how many? _____

124. With what race/ethnicity do you identify?

____ (1) Hispanic/Latino(a) ____ (2) Black/African American ____ (3) American Indian

____ (4) White/Caucasian ____ (5) Asian/ Pacific Islander ____ (6) Other

125. What was the issue discussed in the article that you read?

- a. Housing foreclosure
- b. Traffic
- c. Art fair

126. What was pictured in the photograph that accompanied the article that you read?

- a. House
- b. Gay male couple
- c. Heterosexual couple
- d. Automobiles

127. What is your annual income?

- a. Less than \$10,000
- b. \$10,001-\$25,000
- c. \$25,001-\$40,000
- d. \$40,001-\$55,000
- e. \$55,001-\$70,000
- f. \$70,001-\$85,000

g. More than \$85,000

128. How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Exclusively								Exclusively
Heterosexual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Homosexual

129. Have you participated in this study before?

____ Yes ____ No

Thank you.